



Australian Bureau of Statistics

6291.0.55.003 - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, Nov 2013

Previous ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 19/12/2013

Summary

Main Features

Data from the monthly Labour Force Survey are released in two stages. The Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) are part of the second release, and include detailed data not contained in the Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) product set, which is released one week earlier.

The Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) is released monthly. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) includes data only collected in February, May, August and November (including industry and occupation).

Since these products are based on the same data as the Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) publication, the 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia Explanatory Notes are relevant to both releases.

UPCOMING CHANGE TO GEOGRAPHY STANDARD USED IN THE LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) introduced a new geographical classification, the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS), on 1 July 2011 prior to conducting the 2011 Census of Population and Housing. The new geography standard has been designed to provide users with statistical regions that are more stable over time, consistent in size, more detailed, better representative of underlying settlement patterns and socio-economic relationships, and encompassed in a single framework. In addition, the ASGS is adaptable because, as population regions grow, consistency can be maintained with previous regions (i.e. a growing region may be split in two).

In the Labour Force Survey (LFS) geography is used to define areas from which households are selected and to disseminate regional statistics. The ABS redesigns Labour Force regions after each Census and, following the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, introduced the new geographic standard, the ASGS into the sample design.

Despite the LFS sample being selected entirely from an ASGS-based design since August 2013, the ABS is continuing to release estimates on the existing Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) basis until the December 2013 issue. From the January 2014 issue, estimates will no longer be released or available on the ASGC. Labour force estimates will be published using ASGS regions from the January 2014 issue onwards and will be backcast to October 1998.

For further information, please refer to the Information Paper: Regional Labour Force Statistics (ABS cat. no. 6262.0).

UPCOMING CHANGE IN COLLECTION PROCEDURES FOR THE LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

The LFS receives a high level of cooperation from individuals in selected dwellings, with the response rate typically ranging from 95 to 97% each month. However, in recent years it has become increasingly difficult to contact persons selected in the Survey due to changes in lifestyles. This has led to significant increases in costs which are not sustainable. In response, the ABS is refining procedures for the collection of Labour Force data. As a result, from 2014 the LFS response rate is expected to range from 93 to 95% each month. Analysis undertaken by the ABS has shown that this will not have a significant impact on the quality of Labour Force estimates at the Australia and State levels. The impact on regional Labour Force data is still being assessed, but it is unlikely to be significant. Response rates for the ABS's LFS will remain higher than those for similar surveys conducted by national statistical offices in comparable countries.

This initiative is part of a broader program of ABS work to enhance the cost-effectiveness of its response follow-up strategies while maintaining the high quality of its statistics. The ABS remains committed to producing high quality labour force estimates and will continue to monitor the estimates to determine if there is any impact from the changed procedures.

NEW RETIREMENT AND LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION DATA AVAILABLE

The ABS's Labour Statistics Program recently released two articles analysing retirement and labour force participation.

'Incentives to join or increase labour force participation' was included in the 28 November release of Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia, 2012-13 (cat. no. 6239.0). It examines some of the incentives people reported to be 'very important' to encourage them to participate (or increase participation) in the labour force. Both persons not in the labour force and those employed part-time place importance on being able to work part-time hours and being able to work set hours on set days. This highlights the preference for many in these groups to engage in, or maintain, part-time employment to enable them to balance their work with other commitments. The unemployed placed importance on utilising their existing skills/experience and improving their skills through training/study. This demonstrates the importance of skills, experience and job fit in assisting them transition into employment. For females with children aged under 13 years, child care incentives were particularly important.

'Changing retirement intentions and behaviours - an age cohort analysis' was included in the 9 December release of Retirement and Retirement Intentions, Australia, 2012-13 (cat. no. 6238.0). It compares the retirement intentions and behaviours of four age cohorts in 2012-13 against the expectations of each of the same cohorts in earlier years. The article found that in general, less people were retired in 2012-13 than expected to be when asked in 2004-05, which indicates that people are retiring later than previously intended. While people are remaining in the labour force longer than expected, the proportion of people working part-time before retirement had increased, and there was a decrease in the proportion of people working part-time hours but preferring more hours. Together these findings point to a voluntary transition to retirement through working part-time. It was also found that people were most likely to have government pension as their main source of income at retirement in 2012-13 despite most of the same cohort expecting to retire mainly

on superannuation.

500TH LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

On Sunday 1 December, the 500th LFS went into the field for enumeration - 70 quarterly surveys between November 1960 and February 1978 followed by 430 monthly surveys between March 1978 and December 2013.

The LFS is the Bureau's longest running household survey and has provided the basis on which the ABS has built an extensive program of labour and social surveys of the Australian population. The LFS provides official statistics about the number of employed and unemployed Australians and their working arrangements.

ABS household surveys, including the LFS, draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated: without it, the wide range of population and social statistics published by the ABS would not be available.

Results from the 500th LFS will be published on 16 January 2014.

Article Archive

This section provides an archive of articles and analysis published in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), promoting the effective use of labour force statistics. Articles are sorted by publication date.

Articles on labour related topics are also regularly released in Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0) and Australian Social Trends (cat. no. 4102.0).

What's new in the Labour Force	November 2013
What's new in the Labour Force	September 2013
Understanding full-time/part-time status in the Labour Force Survey	September 2013
What's new in the Labour Force	June 2013
New Labour Force Sample Design	May 2013
Annual Seasonal Reanalysis	May 2013
What's new in Labour Force	May 2013
Transition to online collection of the Labour Force Survey	April 2013
What's new in Labour Force	April 2013
Estimating Jobs in the Australian Labour Market	February 2013
Forthcoming improvements to the content of the Labour Force and Labour Supplementary Surveys	January 2013
What's new in Labour Force	January 2013
Understanding the Australian Labour Force using ABS statistics	January 2013
Rebenchmarking of Labour Force Series	November 2012
Upcoming changes to the Labour Force Survey	July 2012
Labour Household Surveys content review and the Labour Force Survey	June 2012

Employment and mining in Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia	May 2012
ABS Response to recent concerns expressed about employment estimates	April 2012
Population Benchmarks and Labour Force Survey	April 2012
Annual Seasonal Reanalysis	March 2012
Exploring Labour Force Data on joblessness	February 2012
Employment level estimates versus employment to population explained	January 2012
Understanding the Australian Labour Force using ABS statistics	November 2011
Historical Revisions	February 2011
Impact of the floods on the Labour Force Survey	January 2011

About this Release

A range of quarterly Excel spreadsheets and SuperTABLE datacubes. The spreadsheets contain broad level data covering all the major items of the Labour Force Survey in time series format, including seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. The datacubes contain more detailed and cross classified original data than the spreadsheets.

Explanatory Notes

Explanatory Notes

Data from the monthly Labour Force Survey are released in two stages. The Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) are part of the second release, and include detailed data not contained in the Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) product set, which is released one week earlier.

The Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) is released monthly. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) includes data only collected in February, May, August and November (including industry and occupation).

Since these products are based on the same data as the Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) publication, the 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia Explanatory Notes are relevant to both releases.

Standard Errors

Estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are based on information collected from people in a sample of dwellings, rather than the entire population. Hence the estimates produced may differ from those that would have been produced if the entire population had been included in the survey. The most common measure of the likely difference (or

'sampling error') is the **standard error** (SE).

The ABS considers that estimates with a relative standard error of 25% or more may be subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes.

To determine if an item has a relative standard error of 25% or more, in SuperTABLE, right click in the centre of the table, select annotate cells - standard annotations, and select 'Annotate RSE cut-off values'.

To indicate those cells in spreadsheets with a relative standard error of 25% or more, annotations have been applied prior to dissemination.

In addition, the tables below have been supplied to show estimates at which the relative standard error is 25%. Estimates of the size indicated in the tables, or smaller, are considered to be subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes.

Due to the January 2011 flooding in Queensland the relative standard errors for January will be higher than normal in some regions, therefore for Queensland the estimates at which the relative standard error is 25% will be higher than they appear in the tables below. However from February, the data returns to normal.

The RSEs for July 2013 (50% old sample, 50% new sample) and onwards will be subject to revisions in the future, as more information is known about the new sample after it has been introduced.

Additional information on how standard errors for LFS estimates are produced is available in Labour Force Survey Standard Errors, Data Cube (cat. no. 6298.0.55.001).

State	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Aust
Employed									
Feb 1978 - Sep 1982	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.5
Oct 1982 - Aug 1987	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5
Sep 1987 - Aug 1992	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Sep 1992 - Aug 1997	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep 1997 - Mar 2001	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Apr 2001 - Oct 2007	4.9	4.1	3.7	2.0	2.3	1.1	1.4	1.1	4.9
Nov 2007	5.0	4.1	3.8	2.0	2.4	1.2	1.3	1.1	5.0
Dec 2007	5.0	4.2	3.9	2.0	2.4	1.2	1.2	1.1	5.0
Jan 2008	5.1	4.3	3.9	2.1	2.5	1.2	1.2	1.2	5.1
Feb 2008	5.2	4.4	4.0	2.1	2.6	1.2	1.1	1.2	5.1
Mar 2008	5.4	4.4	4.1	2.1	2.9	1.2	1.0	1.2	5.2
Apr 2008	5.5	4.6	4.5	2.2	3.0	1.2	0.9	1.3	5.3
May 2008	5.5	4.7	4.5	2.3	3.1	1.3	0.9	1.3	5.4
Jun 2008	5.6	4.8	4.6	2.3	3.2	1.3	0.9	1.3	5.4
Jul 2008 - Aug 2009	7.0	6.0	5.7	2.9	4.0	1.6	1.0	1.6	7.7
Sep 2009	6.6	5.7	5.4	2.7	3.7	1.5	1.0	1.5	7.2
Oct 2009	6.2	5.4	5.1	2.6	3.5	1.4	0.9	1.4	6.7
Nov 2009	5.9	5.1	4.9	2.4	3.3	1.3	0.9	1.4	6.4
Dec 2009 - Jun 2013	5.6	4.8	4.6	2.3	3.2	1.3	0.9	1.3	6.0
Jul 2013 onwards	7.7	3.8	5.5	2.7	3.8	1.4	0.3	1.7	7.8
Unemployed									
Feb 1978 - Sep 1982	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.5
Oct 1982 - Aug 1987	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5

Sep 1987 - Aug 1992	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Sep 1992 - Aug 1997	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep 1997 - Mar 2001	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Apr 2001 - Oct 2007	5.7	4.9	4.2	2.7	3.0	1.7	2.4	1.5	4.7
Nov 2007	5.8	5.0	4.3	2.8	3.2	1.7	2.2	1.6	4.8
Dec 2007	5.9	5.1	4.4	2.8	3.3	1.7	1.9	1.6	4.8
Jan 2008	6.0	5.3	4.5	2.9	3.4	1.7	1.8	1.7	4.9
Feb 2008	6.2	5.4	4.7	3.0	3.6	1.8	1.6	1.7	4.9
Mar 2008	6.4	5.5	4.8	3.0	3.9	1.8	1.5	1.8	5.0
Apr 2008	6.5	5.8	5.2	3.2	4.1	1.8	1.4	1.9	5.1
May 2008	6.6	5.9	5.3	3.3	4.3	1.9	1.3	2.0	5.2
Jun 2008	6.8	6.1	5.5	3.3	4.5	1.9	1.3	2.1	5.2
Jul 2008 - Aug 2009	8.9	8.0	7.3	4.4	6.0	2.5	1.6	2.7	7.5
Sep 2009	8.3	7.4	6.7	4.1	5.5	2.3	1.5	2.5	7.0
Oct 2009	7.7	6.9	6.3	3.8	5.2	2.1	1.4	2.3	6.5
Nov 2009	7.2	6.5	5.9	3.6	4.8	2.0	1.3	2.2	6.1
Dec 2009 - Jun 2013	6.8	6.1	5.5	3.3	4.5	1.9	1.3	2.1	5.8
Jul 2013 onwards	7.3	6.6	8.4	3.7	5.8	1.7	1.3	2.2	7.1

NILF

Feb 1978 - Sep 1982	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.5
Oct 1982 - Aug 1987	4.0	4.0	3.2	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5
Sep 1987 - Aug 1992	4.5	4.5	3.2	2.2	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Sep 1992 - Aug 1997	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep 1997 - Mar 2001	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Apr 2001 - Oct 2007	5.9	4.8	4.4	2.5	2.9	1.3	1.8	1.3	5.3
Nov 2007	6.0	4.9	4.5	2.5	3.0	1.4	1.7	1.4	5.3
Dec 2007	6.1	5.0	4.5	2.6	3.0	1.4	1.6	1.4	5.4
Jan 2008	6.2	5.1	4.6	2.6	3.1	1.4	1.5	1.4	5.4
Feb 2008	6.2	5.2	4.7	2.7	3.2	1.4	1.4	1.5	5.5
Mar 2008	6.6	5.4	4.8	2.7	3.6	1.4	1.2	1.5	5.6
Apr 2008	6.7	5.6	5.3	2.9	3.7	1.5	1.1	1.6	5.7
May 2008	6.8	5.7	5.5	2.9	3.9	1.5	1.1	1.6	5.8
Jun 2008	6.9	5.9	5.6	3.0	4.0	1.5	1.0	1.7	5.8
Jul 2008 - Aug 2009	8.7	7.4	7.1	3.7	5.1	1.9	1.3	2.0	8.3
Sep 2009	8.1	7.0	6.6	3.5	4.8	1.7	1.2	1.9	7.8
Oct 2009	7.7	6.6	6.2	3.3	4.5	1.7	1.1	1.8	7.3
Nov 2009	7.2	6.2	5.9	3.1	4.2	1.6	1.1	1.7	6.9
Dec 2009 - Jun 2013	6.9	5.9	5.6	3.0	4.0	1.5	1.0	1.7	6.5
Jul 2013 onwards	8.4	4.4	9.8	3.6	4.5	1.8	0.7	2.5	9.0

Capital City / Balance of State	Sep 1992 - Aug 1997	Sep 1997 - Mar 2001	Apr 2001 - Oct 2007	Nov 2007 - Jun 2008	Jul 2008 - Nov 2009	Dec 2009 - Jun 2013	From Jul 2013
Sydney	5.3	5.7	5.0	5.8	7.3	5.8	8.1
Balance of NSW	5.3	5.7	5.0	5.7	7.2	5.7	8.0
Melbourne	4.6	4.6	4.2	5.0	6.3	5.0	3.7
Balance of Victoria	4.6	4.3	4.1	4.9	6.1	4.9	3.6
Brisbane	3.5	3.7	3.5	4.3	5.4	4.3	6.9
Balance of Queensland	3.6	4.3	3.7	4.7	5.8	4.7	7.5
Adelaide	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.5	3.1	2.5	3.1
Balance of South Australia	2.5	2.2	2.0	2.4	2.9	2.4	2.9
Perth	2.9	2.6	2.5	3.4	4.2	3.4	4.1

Balance of Western Australia	2.9	2.8	2.3	3.2	4.0	3.2	3.9
Hobart	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.3
Balance of Tasmania	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.3	1.6

Regions	Nov 2007	Jul 2008	Dec 2009	From Jul 2013
	- Jun 2008	- Nov 2009	- Jun 2013	
Inner Sydney and Inner Western Sydney	8.0	10.5	8.0	10.5
Inner Sydney	8.5	11.1	8.5	11.1
Inner Western Sydney	7.4	9.8	7.4	9.7
Eastern Suburbs	9.6	12.5	9.6	12.5
St. George-Sutherland	7.3	9.6	7.3	9.6
Canterbury-Bankstown	7.3	9.5	7.3	9.5
Fairfield-Liverpool and Outer South Western Sydney	7.4	9.7	7.4	9.7
Fairfield-Liverpool	7.5	9.8	7.5	9.8
Outer South Western Sydney	7.3	9.6	7.3	9.5
Central Western Sydney	7.9	10.4	7.9	10.3
North Western Sydney	7.3	9.5	7.3	9.5
Lower Northern Sydney	7.8	10.3	7.8	10.2
Central Northern Sydney	7.2	9.5	7.2	9.4
Northern Beaches	7.8	10.2	7.8	10.1
Gosford-Wyong	7.4	9.7	7.4	9.6
Hunter	7.1	9.3	7.1	9.2
Newcastle	7.1	9.3	7.1	9.2
Hunter excluding Newcastle	7.1	9.3	7.1	9.3
Illawarra and South Eastern NSW	7.7	10.1	7.7	10.1
Illawarra	8.1	10.6	8.1	10.5
Wollongong	7.6	10.0	7.6	9.9
Illawarra excluding Wollongong	9.0	11.7	9.0	11.7
South Eastern NSW	7.2	9.4	7.2	9.3
Richmond-Tweed and Mid-North Coast	7.6	10.0	7.6	9.9
Northern, Far West, North Western and Central West NSW	7.5	9.8	7.5	9.7
Northern, North Western and Central West NSW	7.6	9.9	7.6	9.9
Far West NSW	6.4	8.4	6.4	8.4
Murray-Murrumbidgee	7.5	9.9	7.5	9.8
North Western Melbourne	6.5	8.5	6.5	5.0
Outer Western Melbourne	5.9	7.8	5.9	4.6
Inner Melbourne	7.4	9.7	7.4	5.8
North Eastern Melbourne	6.4	8.3	6.4	4.9
Inner Eastern Melbourne	6.1	8.0	6.1	4.7
Southern Melbourne	6.3	8.2	6.3	4.9
Outer Eastern Melbourne	6.5	8.5	6.5	5.0
South Eastern Melbourne	6.1	8.0	6.1	4.8
Mornington Peninsula	6.2	8.1	6.2	4.8
Barwon-Western District	6.3	8.2	6.3	4.9
Central Highlands-Wimmera	6.8	8.9	6.8	5.3
Loddon-Mallee	6.5	8.6	6.5	5.1
Goulbourn-Ovens-Murray	7.2	9.4	7.2	5.6
All Gippsland	7.0	9.1	7.0	5.4
Brisbane City Inner Ring	5.8	7.6	5.8	8.9

Brisbane City Outer Ring	5.6	7.3	5.6	8.6
South and East BSD Balance	5.6	7.3	5.6	8.6
North BSD Balance	5.3	7.0	5.3	8.2
Ipswich City	5.3	7.0	5.3	8.2
Gold Coast	6.2	8.1	6.2	9.6
Gold Coast North	7.4	9.7	7.4	11.5
Gold Coast South	5.9	7.7	5.9	9.1
Sunshine Coast	5.9	7.7	5.9	9.1
West Moreton	5.9	7.7	5.9	9.1
Wide Bay-Burnett	6.2	8.2	6.2	9.6
Mackay-Fitzroy-Central West Qld	5.7	7.5	5.7	8.9
Darling Downs-South West Qld	6.3	8.2	6.3	9.7
Northern-North West Qld	6.4	8.4	6.4	9.9
Far North Qld	6.7	8.8	6.7	10.4
Northern Adelaide	3.0	3.9	3.0	3.7
Western Adelaide	3.4	4.4	3.4	4.1
Eastern Adelaide	3.1	4.0	3.1	3.8
Southern Adelaide	3.1	4.0	3.1	3.8
Southern and Eastern SA	2.8	3.7	2.8	3.5
Northern and Western SA	3.4	4.4	3.4	4.2
Central Metropolitan Perth	4.8	6.3	4.8	5.8
East Metropolitan Perth	4.5	5.9	4.5	5.4
North Metropolitan Perth	4.3	5.7	4.3	5.2
South West Metropolitan Perth	4.2	5.5	4.2	5.0
South East Metropolitan Perth	4.5	5.9	4.5	5.5
Lower Western WA	3.8	5.0	3.8	4.6
Remainder-Balance WA	4.5	5.8	4.5	5.4
Greater Hobart	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.3
Southern Tas	1.9	2.5	1.9	2.3
Northern Sector Tas	1.5	2.0	1.5	1.8
Mersey-Lyell Sector	1.6	2.0	1.6	1.9

Quality Declaration - Summary

QUALITY DECLARATION - SUMMARY

INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Labour Force statistics are compiled from the Labour Force Survey which is conducted each month throughout Australia as part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) household survey program. For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.

RELEVANCE

The Labour Force Survey provides monthly information about the labour market activity of Australia's resident civilian population aged 15 years and over. The Labour Force Survey is designed to primarily provide estimates of employment and unemployment for the whole of Australia and, secondarily, for each state and territory.

TIMELINESS

The Labour Force Survey enumeration begins on the Sunday between the 5th and 11th of the month, except for the Christmas and New Year holiday period. In December enumerations starts between the 3rd and 9th (4 weeks after November enumeration begins). In January enumeration starts between the 7th and 13th (5 weeks after December enumeration begins).

Key estimates from the Labour Force Survey are published in two stages. The first, Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), is released 32 days after the commencement of enumeration for the month, with the exception of estimates for December which are published 39 days after the commencement of enumeration.

The second stage includes detailed data that were not part of the first stage and are published in Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003). The second stage is released 7 days after the first stage.

ACCURACY

The Labour Force Survey is based on a sample of private dwellings (approximately 26,000 houses, flats etc) and non-private dwellings, such as hotels and motels. The sample covers about 0.32% of the Australian civilian population aged 15 years or over. The Labour Force Survey is designed primarily to provide estimates of key labour force statistics for the whole of Australia and, secondarily, for each state and territory.

Two types of error are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey: non-sampling error and sampling error.

Non-sampling error arises from inaccuracies in collecting, recording and processing the data. Every effort is made to minimise reporting error by the careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient data processing procedures. Non-sampling error also arises because information cannot be obtained from all persons selected in the survey. The Labour Force Survey receives a high level of cooperation, with an average response rate for the last year being 96%.

Sampling error occurs because a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed. One measure of the likely difference resulting from not including all dwellings in the survey is given by the standard error. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

Standard errors of key estimates and movements since the previous month are available in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0). The standard error of other estimates and movements may be calculated by using the spreadsheet contained in Labour Force Survey Standard Errors, Data Cube (cat. no. 6298.0.55.001).

COHERENCE

The ABS has been conducting the Labour Force Survey each month since February 1978. While seeking to provide a high degree of consistency and comparability over time by minimising changes to the survey, sound survey practice requires careful and continuing maintenance and development to maintain the integrity of the data and the efficiency of the collection.

The changes which have been made to the Labour Force Survey have included changes in sampling methods, estimation methods, concepts, data item definitions, classifications, and time series analysis techniques. In introducing these changes the ABS has generally revised previous estimates to ensure consistency and coherence with current estimates. For a full list of changes made to the Labour Force Survey see Chapter 20 in Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).

INTERPRETABILITY

The key estimates from the Labour Force Survey are available as original, seasonally adjusted and trend series. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so other influences on the series can be more clearly recognised. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove the irregular influences which may be present and therefore month-to-month movements may not be reliable indicators of underlying behaviour. To assist in interpreting the underlying behaviour, the ABS produces the trend series by smoothing the seasonally adjusted series to reduce the impact of the irregular component. For further information, see A Guide to Interpreting Time Series - Monitoring Trends (cat. no. 1349.0).

Further information on the terminology and other technical aspects associated with statistics from the Labour Force Survey can be found in the publication Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), which contains detailed Explanatory Notes, Standard Error information and a Glossary.

ACCESSIBILITY

Please see the Related Information tab for the list of products that are available from this collection.